

1st April 2021

GAJ/vcm/MayAssessments21

Dear Parents and Carers of Year 13 Students

These are the guidance notes given to students today for the May Assessments.

Which subjects will have an assessment?

- All A-levels except Art & Photography
- Vocational courses – Forensics, Health & Social Care, Sport

How long will each assessment last?

- 2 hours - each subject will have just one assessment.

What will be assessed?

- We will assess content from years 12 and 13, focusing on the content not assessed in March.

What will the assessment consist of?

- Exam questions.
- Teachers may use questions from the Additional Assessment Materials published by the exam boards, but they are not required to do so.

When will we know what to revise?

- We will tell you the broad content of the assessments no later than Thursday 1st April.
- We don't intend to give you quite as much detail as we did for the March assessments.

Supporting your preparation

- Homework until the assessments take place will focus only on revision and preparation for the assessments.
- Teachers can set homework, but they will be aware that some of you prefer to take control of your revision yourself.
- Teachers might spend some time in lessons preparing you for these assessments.

What is the timetable for these assessments?

- We will use the same timetable as for the March assessments.

Day	Morning (8:45am)	Afternoon (12:15pm)
Wednesday 12.05.21	Biology, Computer Science, Politics	English Language, Maths
Thursday 13.05.21	Psychology, Physics	History, Geography, Health & Social Care
Friday 14.05.21	Business Studies, Latin, Further Maths, Sociology, D&T, Spanish, Media	Classics, Economics, French
Monday 17.05.21	Religious Studies, Maths Studies, German, Drama	English Literature, Chemistry, Forensics

- There will be a small number of clashes where some students are timetabled to sit two assessments at the same time.
- We know about these clashes and we will resolve them for you in the same way as we did in March.

Where will these assessments take place?

- In the Sports Hall or Dance Studio, with access arrangements in G182
- Assessments will run under exam conditions
- You will receive an Assessment Timetable from the Exams Office showing you the room for each assessment and your seat number.

Access arrangements

- All students entitled to access arrangements will be given these.

Will these assessments count towards final grades this summer?

- Yes, in the same way as March assessments do.

Grades

- There are many different names for grades that we use to predict or measure each student's performance.
- This year we will have to submit a Teacher Assessed Grade (TAG) for each subject to the exam board.
- The TAG will be determined by teachers following rigorous quality assurance processes. (We are working out the details of these processes after the publication of guidance on 26th March.)
- The TAG must be based on a range of evidence of performance.
- We have agreed that we will consider the following evidence when determining grades:
 1. March and May assessments; NEA (also known as coursework)
 2. Mock exam results from October 2020
 3. Results of other work completed under controlled conditions during the course
- This list is in order of priority and we would only consider evidence from category 2 and 3 if the evidence from category 1 was insufficient or inconsistent.

What can I do to get a better grade?

- Your final grade is judged on your performance.
- There are two assessment points in March and May and these are your opportunities to show how well you are doing.
- Do not ask your teachers if you can do extra work to prove what grade you can achieve: we have to be fair to all students and give everyone studying a subject the same opportunities.
- The simple way to get the best grade is to keep working hard, revise for your forthcoming assessment and ask for help when you need it.

What is happening to March assessments?

- Subject teachers have met to ensure they are all marking to the same standard: teachers mark a sample of papers and discuss how to apply the mark scheme accurately.
- Teachers are now marking the assessments.
- We will tell you your mark in each assessment.
- We will not give you back your assessment.
- We are not grading these assessments.
- We will give general feedback where this is relevant to the May assessments: teachers will focus on skills and exam technique.

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What should I do if I think my performance is affected by illness or other personal circumstances?

- If you were ill or affected by any other event at the time of your March (or May) assessments, please email Mrs Light (vlight@stjohns.excalibur.org.uk)
- Please do not contact individual teachers.
- We will take appropriate account of any difficulties at the time we determine your TAGs

Why aren't we giving you your assessments back?

- The final grading process will be based on teachers comparing your work in these assessments with grade descriptors published by JCQ, the exam boards' overarching body.
- This process is not based on marks or grades in each assessment, but rather on how well your work matches these grade descriptors.
- If you have concerns about the accuracy of marking, despite the processes we have in place to ensure consistency within school and with national standards, the appropriate time to raise these will be when you receive your final grades on 10th August.
- For students who feel they have been graded incorrectly, we will have a formal appeals process and as part of this we will let you see your assessment papers.

Where can I find out more information?

- JCQ have published [guidance for students and parents](#).

Yours sincerely

G Joyce

Mrs G Joyce
Head of Year 13